

**ABSTRACT**

A method of verifying the accuracy or authenticity of alphanumeric magnetic data on a document, wherein the configuration of a pictorial or graphic magnetic reference image in the document is made visible by bringing movable particulate magnetic material into proximity therewith such that the particulate magnetic material takes up a distribution corresponding to the magnetic field of the reference image; and the magnetic image configuration thus revealed is compared with the reference image to identify any significant disconformity suggesting past exposure of the document to a magnetic field capable of altering said magnetic data.